



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/743,667	12/22/2003	John Collier	ETH-5115	7614

25570 7590 03/25/2009
ROBERTS MLOTKOWSKI SAFRAN & COLE, P.C.
Intellectual Property Department
P.O. Box 10064
MCLEAN, VA 22102-8064

EXAMINER

RYCKMAN, MELISSA K

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
----------	--------------

3773

NOTIFICATION DATE	DELIVERY MODE
-------------------	---------------

03/25/2009

ELECTRONIC

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Notice of the Office communication was sent electronically on above-indicated "Notification Date" to the following e-mail address(es):

lgallaugh@rmsclaw.com
dbeltran@rmsclaw.com
bdiaz@rmsclaw.com

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/743,667	Applicant(s) COLLIER ET AL.	
	Examiner MELISSA RYCKMAN	Art Unit 3773	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 17 November 2008.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1,7-13 and 15-26 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1,7-13 and 15-26 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, including the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e), was filed in this application after final rejection. Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the finality of the previous Office action has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on 1/5/09 has been entered.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

Claims 15 and 22 recites the limitation "said central longitudinal axis". There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

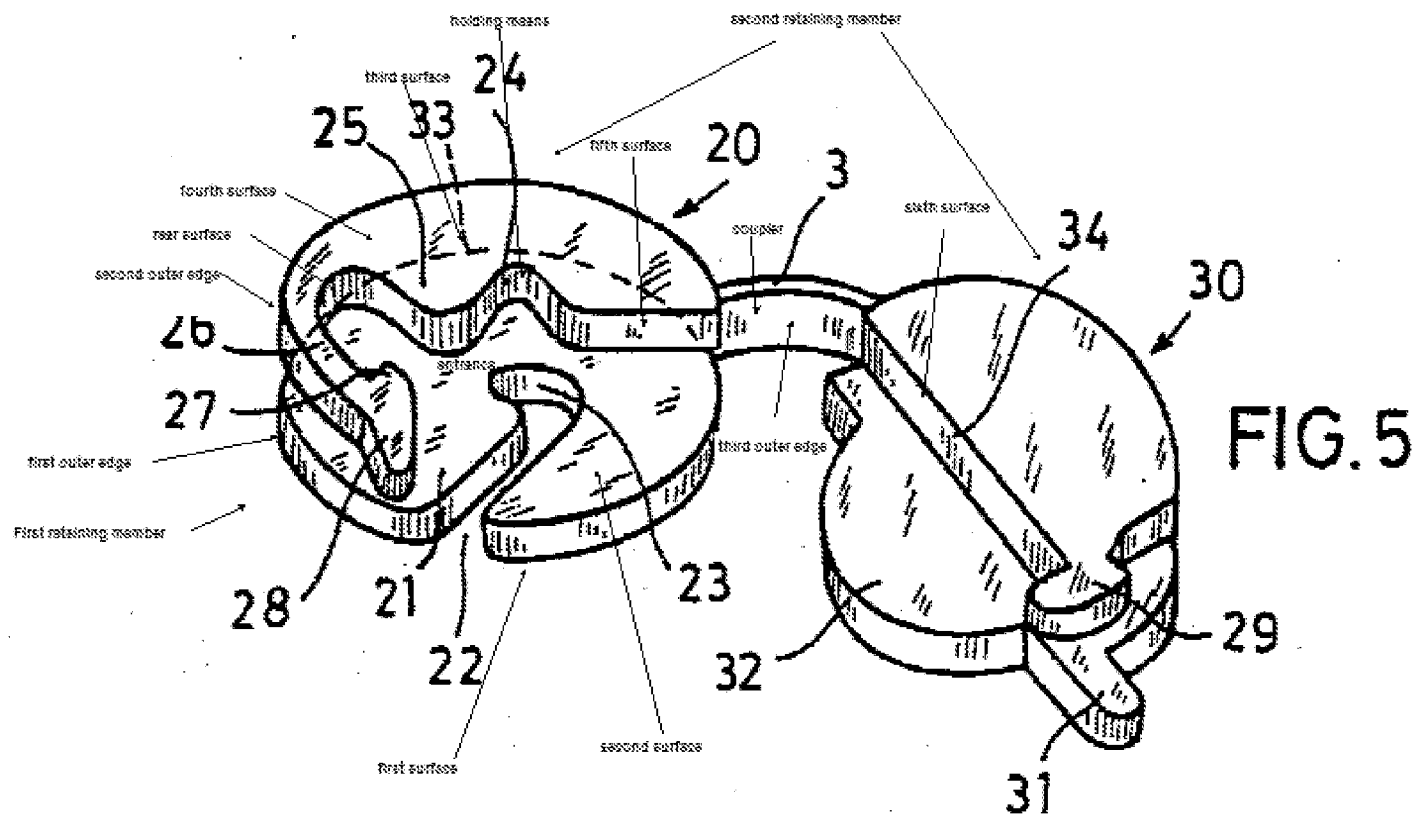
(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 1, 4, 7, 11, 12 and 13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Fuchs et al. (US 4291698).

Regarding Claim 1, Fuchs teaches a suture anchoring device comprising: a first retaining member (21) having a central longitudinal axis (when holding the device of

Art Unit: 3773

Fuchs vertically a longitudinal axis bisects the circle) having a first surface, a second surface and a first outer edge; where the second surface lies in a first plane; the first retaining member having an opening that extends from the first outer edge to an inner point of the first retaining member; a second retaining member having a central longitudinal axis (when holding the device of Fuchs vertically a longitudinal axis bisects the circle), third surface, a fourth surface, a fifth surface, a sixth surface and a second outer edge; where the third surface lies in a second plane, and the fifth surface and the sixth surface lie nominally perpendicular to the second outer edge at their lines of intersection therewith; a holding means positioned within the second retaining member, the holding means comprised of an opening extending from the fifth or the sixth surface to within the second retaining member; and a coupler having a third outer edge and a cross-sectional area taken in a plane parallel to the first plane that is smaller than the cross-sectional area of the first retaining member taken in a plane parallel to the first plane; where the coupler is positioned along said central longitudinal axis of said first and second retaining member (when holding the device of Fuchs vertically a longitudinal axis bisects the circle) and joins the first retaining member to the second retaining member at the second surface and the third surface; wherein the second and third surfaces are parallel to each other and non-coterminous (see fig. 5 below).



Alternatively, with respect to figures 1-3 regarding Claim 1, Fuchs teaches a suture anchoring device comprising: a first retaining member (4) having a first surface, a second surface and a first outer edge; where the second surface lies in a first plane; the first retaining member having an opening (7) that extends from the first outer edge to an inner point of the first retaining member; a second retaining member (1) having a third surface, a fourth surface, a fifth surface, a sixth surface and a second outer edge (11); where the third surface lies in a second plane, and the fifth surface and the sixth surface lie nominally perpendicular to the second outer edge at their lines of intersection therewith; a holding means (defined by portions 8 and 9) positioned within the second retaining member, the holding means comprised of an opening extending from the fifth

Art Unit: 3773

or the sixth surface to within the second retaining member; and a coupler having (fig. 3) a third outer edge and a cross-sectional area taken in a plane parallel to the first plane that is smaller than the cross-sectional area of the first retaining member taken in a plane parallel to the first plane; where the coupler joins the first retaining member to the second retaining member at the second surface and the third surface (fig. 3); wherein the second and third surfaces are parallel to each other and non-coterminous (fig. 2), and the opening on the first retaining member extends from the first outer edge to the third outer edge of the coupler (the examiner interprets extends from as the direction of the path of the opening extends in the direction of the third outer edge, the claim does not state the opening contacts the first outer edge and the third outer edge).

Regarding Claim 4, Fuchs teaches the suture anchoring device of claim 1, where the opening (22) on the first retaining member extends from the second surface to the first surface (fig. 5).

Regarding claim 7, Fuchs teaches the suture anchoring device of claim 1, where the holding means opening further comprises an entrance and a rear surface and the width of the entrance is less than the width of the rear surface (fig. 5).

Regarding Claim 10, Fuchs (fig. 2) teaches the device of claim 2, wherein the cross sectional area of the first retaining member (4) is larger than the cross sectional area of the second retaining member (1).

Regarding Claim 11, Fuchs teaches the suture anchoring device of claim 1, wherein the cross-sectional area of the first retaining member (21) taken in a plane

Art Unit: 3773

parallel to the first plane is smaller than the cross sectional area of the second retaining member (20,30) taken in a parallel plane (fig. 4).

Regarding Claim 12, Fuchs teaches the suture anchoring device of claim 1, where the cross-sectional area of the first retaining member taken in a plane parallel to the first plane is substantially the same as the cross-sectional area of the second retaining member taken in a parallel plane (fig. 5).

Regarding Claim 13, Fuchs teaches the suture anchoring device of claim 1 where surfaces and corners are rounded (Fig. 5).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

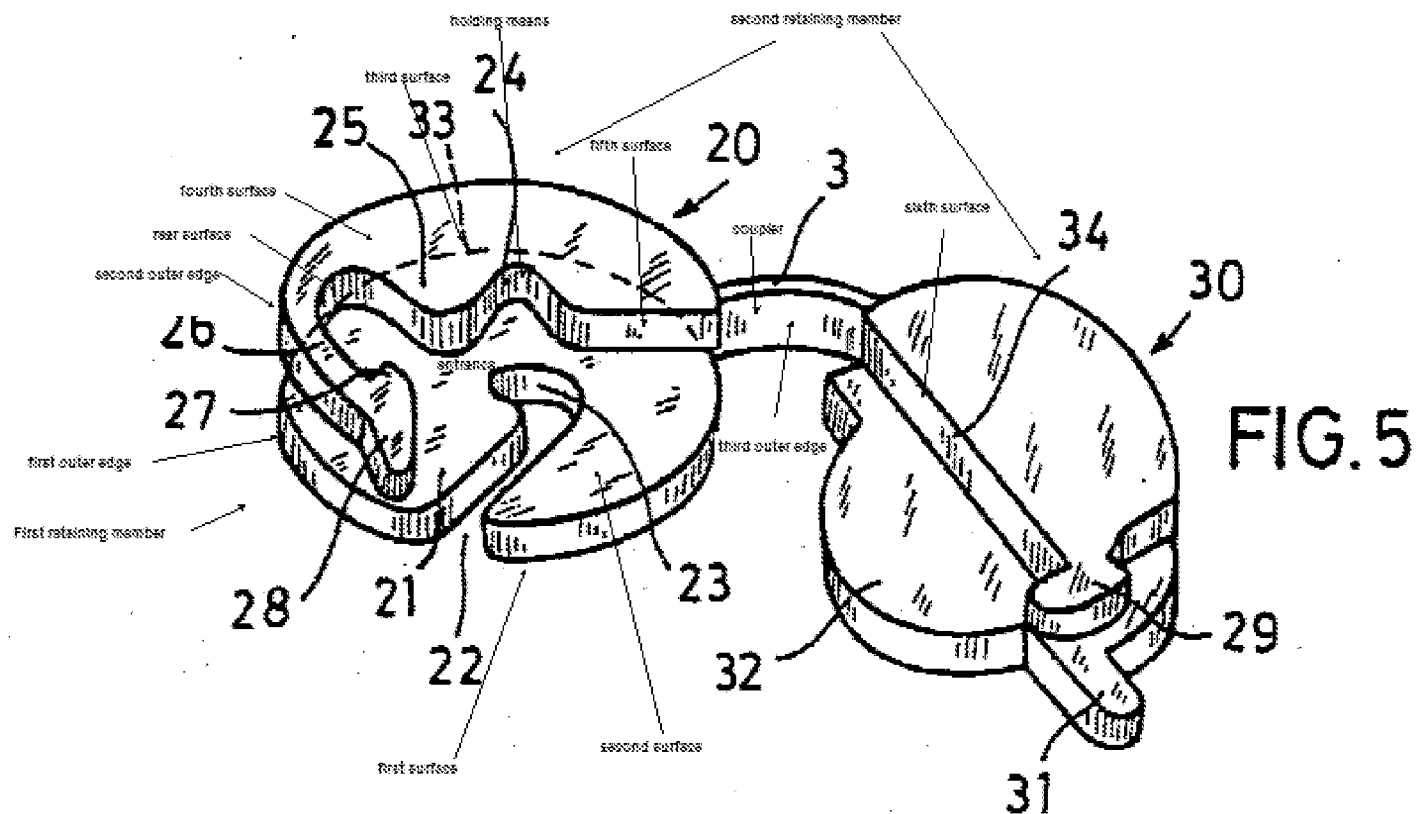
(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 8,9 and 15-26 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over et al. (US 4291698), and further in view of Kammerer et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,152,935).

Regarding Claims 15 and 22, Fuchs teaches a suture anchoring device comprising: a first retaining member (21) having a first surface, a second surface and a first outer edge; where the second surface lies in a first plane; the first retaining member having an opening that extends from the first outer edge to an inner point of the first retaining member; a second retaining member having a third surface, a fourth surface, a

Art Unit: 3773

fifth surface, a sixth surface and a second outer edge; where the third surface lies in a second plane, and the fifth surface and the sixth surface lie nominally perpendicular to the second outer edge at their lines of intersection therewith; a holding means positioned within the second retaining member, the holding means comprised of an opening extending from the fifth or the sixth surface to within the second retaining member; and a coupler having a third outer edge and a cross-sectional area taken in a plane parallel to the first plane that is smaller than the cross-sectional area of the first retaining member taken in a plane parallel to the first plane; where the coupler is positioned axially (the coupler is on an axis, the claim does not state the location of the axis or state the coupler is positioned on a central longitudinal axis of the first and second retaining members) between joins the first retaining member to the second retaining member at the second surface and the third surface; wherein the second and third surfaces are parallel to each other and non-coterminous (see fig. 5 below).



Alternatively, with respect to figures 1-3 regarding Claim 1, Fuchs teaches a suture anchoring device comprising: a first retaining member (4) having a first surface, a second surface and a first outer edge; where the second surface lies in a first plane; the first retaining member having an opening (7) that extends from the first outer edge to an inner point of the first retaining member; a second retaining member (1) having a third surface, a fourth surface, a fifth surface, a sixth surface and a second outer edge (11); where the third surface lies in a second plane, and the fifth surface and the sixth surface lie nominally perpendicular to the second outer edge at their lines of intersection therewith; a holding means (defined by portions 8 and 9) positioned within the second retaining member, the holding means comprised of an opening extending from the fifth

Art Unit: 3773

or the sixth surface to within the second retaining member; and a coupler having (fig. 3) a third outer edge and a cross-sectional area taken in a plane parallel to the first plane that is smaller than the cross-sectional area of the first retaining member taken in a plane parallel to the first plane; where the coupler joins the first retaining member to the second retaining member at the second surface and the third surface (fig. 3); wherein the second and third surfaces are parallel to each other and non-coterminous (fig. 2). Fuchs does not specify the coupler being a cylindrical or helical member, however Kammerer teaches a helical member (12). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to have the coupler be a helical member (the helical member is considered a cylindrical member) as the helical member provides flexibility allowing better placement of the device.

Claims 16 and 23:

Fuchs teaches and the opening on the first retaining member extends from the first outer edge to the third outer edge of the coupler (the examiner interprets extends from as the direction of the path of the opening extends in the direction of the third outer edge, the claim does not state the opening contacts the first outer edge and the third outer edge).

Claims 17 and 24:

Fuchs teaches the opening on the first retaining member extends from the second surface to the first surface (this is shown in the figure above, the opening extends in the upward direction from the retaining means).

Regarding Claims 18 and 26, Fuchs (fig. 2) teaches the device of claim 2, wherein the cross sectional area of the first retaining member (4) is larger than the cross sectional area of the second retaining member (1).

Regarding Claim 19, Fuchs teaches the suture anchoring device of claim 1, wherein the cross-sectional area of the first retaining member (21) taken in a plane parallel to the first plane is smaller than the cross sectional area of the second retaining member (20,30) taken in a parallel plane (fig. 4).

Regarding Claim 20, Fuchs teaches the suture anchoring device of claim 1, where the cross-sectional area of the first retaining member taken in a plane parallel to the first plane is substantially the same as the cross-sectional area of the second retaining member taken in a parallel plane (fig. 5).

Regarding Claim 21, Fuchs teaches the suture anchoring device of claim 1 where surfaces and corners are rounded (Fig. 5).

Regarding Claim 25, Fuchs teaches the suture anchoring device of claim 1, where the holding means opening further comprises an entrance and a rear surface and the width of the entrance is less than the width of the rear surface (fig. 5).

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments filed 11/17/08 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. The applicant generally argues:

- The amendments describing the location of the central axis over the previous rejection

Art Unit: 3773

The examiners position is the applicant does not clearly define the axis and location of the coupler, as the examiner's position is the longitudinal central axis of Fuchs bisect the first and second retention means when holding the first retention means in a vertical position. The amendments do not include the location of the central axis with respect to the third and first surfaces, or being perpendicular to these surfaces, the claims also do not state the coupler being perpendicular to the surfaces as seen in the applicants drawing.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to MELISSA RYCKMAN whose telephone number is (571)272-9969. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday thru Friday 7:30-4:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Jackie Ho can be reached on (571)-272-4696. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Art Unit: 3773

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

MKR

/Melissa Ryckman/
Examiner, Art Unit 3773

/(Jackie) Tan-Uyen T. Ho/
Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 3773